

Welcome to Hadley Point

Hadley Point, where you are right now, is the northernmost part of Mount Desert Island. The water surrounding Hadley Point, the northern reaches of Frenchman Bay, is habitat for a wide array of wildlife. Bald eagle, osprey, common eider, common loon, several species of gulls, harbor seals, and even harbor porpoises can be spotted here almost any time of year. Hadley Point is an important feeding ground for migrating songbirds, and in winter this is a great place to see various ducks including scoters and long-tailed ducks. At low tide, the water exposes extensive mudflats that are home to a variety of marine animals including clams, worms, snails, and crabs.

Hadley Point also has long been a favorite destination for people for both private and commercial uses. Owned by the Town of Bar Harbor, and managed as a multi-use area by the Bar Harbor Parks and Recreation Committee, Hadley Point is a popular picnic area and boat launch for motorized and hand-powered boats like dories and sea kayaks. Shellfish and worm harvesters are often seen working the flats, and aquaculture farmers use the ramp to access their leases. The harvesting of soft-shell clams in the Hadley Point mudflats is monitored and managed by Bar Harbor's Marine Resources Committee. Several other species are harvested at Hadley Point, most notably blue mussel and bloodworms, both of which are managed and monitored by Maine Department of Marine Resources. Individuals can harvest up to two bushels (8 gallons dry) of mussels per day and 125 worms for personal use without a license. Larger quantities of these and any harvesting of other marine species require a license (contact authorities at numbers to the right).

Soft-shell Clams

Soft-shell Clam Ecology

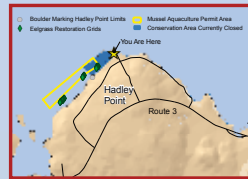
Soft-shell clams (*Mya arenaria*) are named for their relatively thin shell. Compared to other clams, their shells are easily crushed. They bury themselves 3-5 inches into the mud, reaching the surface with their 'neck' or siphon. The siphon is a specialized feeding tube used to pump in seawater from which they filter small free-floating organisms and other edible material. At low tide, the siphon holes are visible, and below each one is a clam. At Hadley Point, it takes at least three years for soft-shell clams to reach the two-inch minimum legal size for harvesting. Clams also have a foot, which they use for burrowing. Clams reproduce by releasing gametes in the water during the late spring and summer, and the larvae develop in the ocean for several weeks before settling on clam flats. Once they arrive on the mudflat, these mobile seed clams live on the top of sediment for a short time until finally assuming the sedentary adult form below the surface. Eelgrass in Frenchman Bay is an important habitat for seed clams.

Harvesting Clams

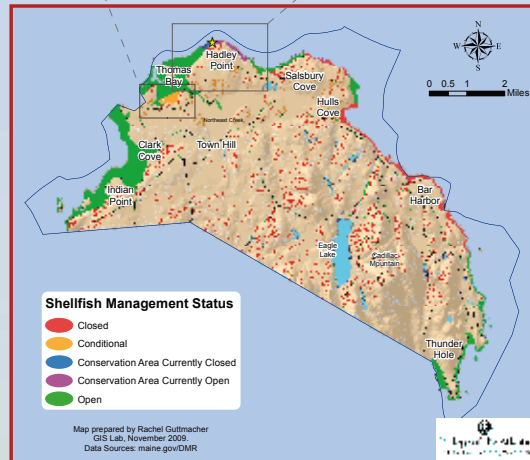
Soft-shell clams are usually abundant at Hadley Point and can be harvested in open areas (see map) with a license. Clamming is done with a special clam rake. Clams that are too small to be legally harvested (less than two inches in length) need to be put back into the sediment with their siphon ('neck') pointed up to ensure their survival. Clam populations are monitored yearly. They are vulnerable to overharvesting and if populations fall too low, the Town of Bar Harbor closes clam flats to harvesting to allow this important resource to recover. With a license, you are allowed one peck (two gallons) of legal sized clams per day. Digging clams without a town shellfish license is a crime with a minimum fine of \$300. At some times during the year, especially after heavy rains or in the summer, clams and other species may become too contaminated to eat safely. Before digging for clams or collecting mussels, always check the Maine red tide hotline. This is a serious and potentially life-threatening concern. See middle panel for all relevant contact information.



It is unlawful to dig for or to possess any clams from this conditional area in Thomas Bay from May 1st - September 30th without a special DMR Permit. This conditional area changes from restricted to open from October 1st - April 30th.



The conservation area west of Hadley Point is closed until July 1, 2010. The east side is currently open.



Shellfish management status within the town of Bar Harbor. Two inserts show a more detailed view of the conservation areas at Hadley Point (upper right) and the seasonally closed area at Thomas Bay (upper left). Always call the DMR hotline to check safety status of eating shellfish before collecting (1-800-232-4733).

Stay Legal, Stay Healthy!

Contact information for healthy and legal harvesting and use of Hadley Point and its marine organisms:

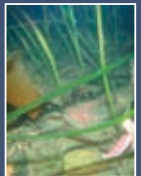
- **Red Tide:** Harmful algal blooms (red tide) are common in Maine especially in the summer and can contaminate the shellfish and make them dangerous to eat. Before clamming, always check the **Maine Red Tide and Shellfish Sanitation Hotline: 1-800-232-4733 or 207-633-9571**
- **Clam harvesting licenses** can be acquired at the Bar Harbor town office, 93 Cottage Street, 207-288-4098
- **Town of Bar Harbor Harbormaster/ Shellfish Warden Office:** 207-288-5571 or pager 207-288-3391
- **Maine Marine Patrol Office** 207-667-3373



PLEASE
clean up after your dog
Dog waste can cause clam flat closures due to unhealthy pollution.

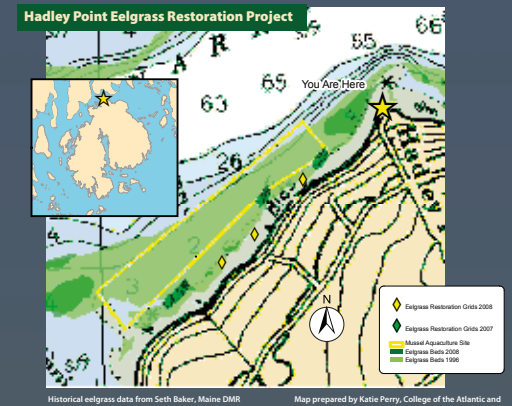
Eelgrass

Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) is a marine plant that grows in dense beds in coastal areas around the world, including here at Hadley Point. Eelgrass beds are important as habitat for a variety of commercially valuable fish and shellfish species such as young lobster, scallops, clams, and mussels. They also serve as nursery areas for many non-commercial species, and provide food for aquatic birds. The complex root systems of eelgrass beds protect water quality and clarity by removing toxics and nutrients from runoff in coastal areas, stabilizing sediments and preventing erosion.



Eelgrass restoration at Hadley Point

Between 1997 and 2007, surveys along the shoreline showed dramatic declines in eelgrass abundance in Frenchman Bay. Since 2007, several partners have worked together to restore eelgrass beds by transplanting eelgrass to Hadley Point from nearby Jordan River. Small grids, like the one held in the picture, provide temporary anchors for mature plants that can both grow out from the grid to produce a larger underwater bed and, over time, seed nearby areas. The location of transplant grids are shown on the map located below. Commercial mussel harvesters have agreed to a voluntary ban on dragging in this transplant area. By 2009, eelgrass abundance had increased dramatically around Hadley Point. Restoration and monitoring work continues.



Eelgrass restoration is a collaborative project of: Town of Bar Harbor Marine Resources Committee, MDI Biological Laboratory, College of the Atlantic, and Acadia Aqua Farms. With cooperation of: Maine Mussel Harvesters Association.



Pack it in, pack it out!